"POWER AFRICA" & PARTNER COUNTRY ENERGY IN THE NEWS

September 21 – October 4, 2014

Article Summaries & Full Clips

The following are articles written by third-party news outlets. The links to this information are provided for your convenience. The U.S. Agency for International Development does not endorse the views or positions stated by the authors of these articles and their media organizations.

IN THE NEWS: Featured "Power Africa" Articles

September 21 – October 4, 2014

POWER AFRICA DEVELOPMENTS

Nigeria, 22 Others Get U.S.$2.2 Million Grant to Boost Renewable Energy

September 30 | The Guardian (Lagos)

Nigeria and 22 other African countries have secured a total grant of $2.2million to boost renewable energy in their respective economies. The fund is under the Power Africa Energy Challenge scheme, which aims to provide electricity access to 20 million households and businesses across Africa

Rural Electrification: Firms Bracing Up For Off-grid Initiative

October 2 | Nigerian News from Leadership Newspapers

Great effort is being made at expanding rural electrification project by some Nigerian companies who are tapping into the Off-grid Challenge, funded by the United States African Development Foundation (USADF), US Agency for International Development (USAID) and GE Africa.

IN THE NEWS: Featured Partner Country Energy News

September 21 – October 4, 2014

AFRICA & REGIONAL NEWS

Electricity in Africa: Lighting a dark continent

September 27 | The Economist

A tally by The Economist of announced power projects (under construction or at an advanced stage of planning) suggests that the region's electricity-generating capacity will increase by more than half by the end of the decade.

East Africa: Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda to Upgrade Cross-Border Power Grid

September 25 | Frontier Blog WSJ

Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda are seeking consultants to conduct a feasibility study to upgrade the cross border electricity grid, officials from the three countries said in joint statement on Thursday, the latest infrastructure drive aimed at fostering economic integration in the region.

East Africa: M-Kopa Solar Powers Up 100,000th Home in East Africa

September 22 | CIO East Africa (Nairobi)

M-KOPA Solar announced on Friday that it has powered up to 100,000 homes in Kenya and Uganda within two years of its commercial launch.

ETHIOPIA

Ethiopia: Asseco to Modernize Energy Billing in Ethiopia

September 20 | The Reporter

A proprietor of a polish IT solution company, Asseco Utility Management Solution (AUMS) and Enterprise Resource Planning solutions (ERP), are set to overhaul the overall energy billing system in Ethiopia following a USD 10 million contract that was signed between Information Network Security Agency (INSA) and Asseco S.A. for the design of a comprehensive energy billing and customer data base management systems in the country.

Shift to 'green economy' boosting economic growth in Ethiopia

African Manager

Ethiopia will boost economic growth by investing in renewable energy sources, introducing new cooking technologies for the rural folk and boosting livestock trade in efforts to cut greenhouse gases, officials said Monday.

GHANA

Ghana positioning as energy hub of West Africa
October 1 | BusinessDay
With citizens' complaints and frantic efforts by government to find a lasting solution to the energy situation in Ghana, President John Dramani Mahama's declaration of a probable end to the continuous inconsistent power supply has been well received.

Ghana To Get Utility-Scale Wind Farm
October 2 | Spyghana.com
Global wind and solar company Mainstream Renewable Power, has signed an agreement with Swiss wind farm developer NEK Umwelttechnik, to build and operate Ghana's first utility-scale wind farm (225 MW) at Ayitepa, 40 kilometres from Accra.

KENYA

Kenya government unveils plan to assess energy consumption and demand
October 2 | Standard Media
Through a new web portal launched by the Kenyan Government, manufacturers will be able to advise Kenya Power in advance on the amount of new or additional power they need to either expand their existing production capacity or start new factories.

Kenya Seeks to Auction Renewable Energy Deals
September 26 | The Star
The government has began search for a consultancy to explore the introduction of renewable energy auctions, with a view to cutting retail consumers' power costs.

LIBERIA

No related articles identified

NIGERIA

Abuja Disco Plans Yearly Installation of 100,000 Prepaid Meters
September 30 | This Day
Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) has said it will procure and install 100,000 pre-paid electricity meters yearly. The roll out of the pre-paid meters to consumers is expected to close-up extant metering gap in the network's coverage areas

American investors earmark $106m, 100mw solar plant in Nigeria
September 26 | National Mirror
Global Business Resources, U.S.A, a consortium of international investors are in Nigeria for a follow-up discussion with the Federal Government for the realization of two 50MW each solar-powered plants in Kumbotso, Kano State and Karu, in Abuja. The group's mission in Nigeria is to focus on developing Actionable Renewable energy generation strategy, using abundant solar resources in the country.

Lagos Intensifies Campaign for Energy Conservation
October 2 | Daily Independent
Lagos State Government has announced moves to intensify its energy conservation effort to bring power to the people of the state and ensure that public offices enjoy 24-hour electricity.

Nigeria Establishes 118 Power Projects to Address Electricity Challenges
October 2 | This Day
The federal government is currently constructing about 118 power projects as part of efforts to tackle the low electricity generation in the country. The 118 power projects spread across the country, are at different stages of completion.

TANZANIA

Millions of Homes to Get Power Next Year
October 1 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)
More than 14 million Tanzanians will be connected to the National Grid by June, next year, when most rural village homes in the country get lit up through the ongoing rural electrification project.

Mtwara Natural Gas to Cut Pollution
September 26 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)
Tanzania has pledged to the United Nations that it would use its 'recently acquired' natural gas fortune to significantly cut its current reliance on air polluting

energy. This is part of the country's specific pledges to the UN on how it would join the rest of the world in implementing some climate change interventions.

Regional Power Project Planned

October 1 |Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Three energy ministers from Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya signed a Cooperation Agreement for the ZTK interconnection power project, which will provide rural areas electricity and attract investors.

Tanesco Vows to End Power Shortages in Dar

September 24 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Tanzania Electric Supply Company (Tanesco) has said that there will no longer be power shortages in Dar es Salaam by August next year. Tanesco Managing Director, Mr Felchesmi Mramba said that construction of the substations is progressing well and will soon be completed thus Dar es Salaam residents will no longer have power problems.

IN THE NEWS - Full Clips

September 21 – October 4, 2014

1. Power Africa - Nigeria, 22 Others Get U.S.$2.2 Million Grant to Boost Renewable Energy | September 30 | The Guardian (Lagos)
2. Power Africa - Rural Electrification: Firms Bracing Up For Off-grid Initiative | October 2 | Nigerian News from Leadership Newspapers
3. Africa - Electricity in Africa: Lighting a dark continent | September 27 | The Economist
4. East Africa: Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda to Upgrade Cross-Border Power Grid | September 25 | Frontier Blog WSJ
5. East Africa: M-Kopa Solar Powers Up 100,000th Home in East Africa | September 22 | CIO East Africa (Nairobi)
6. Ethiopia: Asseco to Modernize Energy Billing in Ethiopia September 20 | The Reporter
7. Ethiopia: Shift to 'green economy' boosting economic growth in Ethiopia | African Manager
8. Ghana positioning as energy hub of West Africa | October 1 | BusinessDay
9. Ghana To Get Utility-Scale Wind Farm | October 2 | Spyghana.com
10. Kenya: Kenya government unveils plan to assess energy consumption and demand | October 2 | Standard Media
11. Kenya: Kenya Seeks to Auction Renewable Energy Deals | September 26 | The Star
12. Nigeria: Abuja Disco Plans Yearly Installation of 100,000 Prepaid Meters | September 30 | This Day
13. Nigeria: American investors earmark $106m, 100mw solar plant in Nigeria September 26 | National Mirror
14. Nigeria: Lagos Intensifies Campaign for Energy Conservation | October 2 | Daily Independent
15. Nigeria: Nigeria Establishes 118 Power Projects to Address Electricity Challenges | October 2 | This Day
16. Tanzania: Millions of Homes to Get Power Next Year | October 1 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)
17. Tanzania: Mtwara Natural Gas to Cut Pollution | September 26 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)
18. Tanzania: Regional Power Project Planned | October 1 |Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)
19. Tanzania: Tanesco Vows to End Power Shortages in Dar | September 24 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Power Africa - Nigeria, 22 Others Get U.S.$2.2 Million Grant to Boost Renewable Energy | September 30 | The Guardian (Lagos)

URL Source: http://allafrica.com/stories/201410010295.html

By Emeka Anuforo

Abuja — NIGERIA and 22 other African countries have secured a total grant of $2.2million to boost renewable energy in their respective economies.

The fund is under the Power Africa Energy Challenge scheme, which aims to provide electricity access to 20 million households and businesses across Africa.

Each country is expected to receive $100,000 each for the power project..

Already, General Electrics, Africa; the United States African Development Foundation (USADF); and the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), at weekend, jointly announced the 22 winners that bided for the second round of the Power Africa Off-Grid Energy Challenge.

They stated to said the money would fund renewable power projects, including wind, solar, hydro-electric and biogas, will provide 3.4megawatts (mw) of new electricity to rural communities across sub-Saharan Africa.

According to the statement, "the winning projects include 14 solar developments, six biogas generation projects, one wind turbine system and a small hydroelectricity power plant,"

The four winners from Nigeria include Topstep Nigeria Ltd, which will be expanding its solar capacity to power its maize mill reaching over 500 people in Kaduna; while Quintas Renewable Energy will be developing a 500kw biomass power plant to power 230 households in Ondo state.

The others are Sky Resources, which will bring off-grid electricity to a village in Imo State through a small solar micro-grid for 75 small businesses; and Ginphed Nigeria will construct a bio-digester to convert animal manure into biogas to be used for electricity generation in local farms.

The four winners and their 18 other African counterparts were selected from nearly 300 applicants with the Off-Grid Challenge being funded by USADF, USAID and GE Africa to promote innovative solutions that scale-up the use of proven technologies for off-grid energy, and increasing access to sustainable power.

President and CEO of GE Africa, Jay Ireland, who commended the winners said "the high quality of submissions we received throughout the Off-Grid Energy Challenge is a testament to the incredible innovation and entrepreneurship that is happening across the continent."

Power Africa - Rural Electrification: Firms Bracing Up For Off-grid Initiative | October 2 | Nigerian News from Leadership Newspapers

Source URL: http://leadership.ng/business/385811/rural-electrification-firms-bracing-grid-initiative

Chika Izuora

Great effort is being made at expanding rural electrification project by some Nigerian companies who are tapping into the Off-grid Challenge, funded by the United States African Development Foundation (USADF), US Agency for International Development (USAID) and GE Africa.

The project aims at promoting innovative solutions that develop, scale-up or extend the use of proven technologies for off-grid energy – increasing access to reliable, affordable and sustainable power.

According to the International Energy Agency, only 12.9 percent of rural communities in sub-Saharan Africa have access to electricity, compared to 64.2 percent in urban areas.

Partners in the project GE Africa and the USADF and USAID last week announced twenty two winners in the second round of their Power Africa Off-grid Energy Challenge.

Selected from nearly 300 applicants, each winner will receive a grant of up to $100,000 to support the deployment of off-grid solutions that put renewable resources to work to power increased economic activity.

Speaking on the initiative president and CEO of GE Africa, Jay Ireland said

“The high quality of submissions we have received throughout the Off-grid Energy Challenge is a testament to the incredible innovation and entrepreneurship that is happening across the continent,”.

The CEO said, “GE has a rich history in Africa that spans more than 100 years and we are very pleased to be a part of this challenge to help identify and accelerate projects that will help Africans to compete in the global economy.”

The winning projects include 14 solar developments, six biogas generation projects, one wind turbine system and a small hydroelectricity power plant. The focus of these projects is on delivering more power for commercial activities, including agriculture production and processing, off-farm businesses, and commercial enterprises.

The Off-grid Energy Challenge is a part of Power Africa, the White House-led initiative to drive growth by increasing access to reliable, affordable, and sustainable power and by helping to ensure responsible, transparent and effective management of energy resources.

The initiative aims to add more than 30,000 megawatts (MW) of cleaner, more efficient electricity generation capacity in sub-Saharan Africa as well as increase electricity access by adding 60 million new home and business connections.

Winners from Ethiopia, Ghana, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria and Tanzania will receive grants of up $100,000 each

Renewable power projects, including wind, solar, hydro-electric and biogas, will provide 3.4 MW of new electricity to rural communities across sub-Saharan Africa

The challenge is part of the broader Power Africa initiative, which aims to provide electricity access to 20 million households and businesses

The president and CEO of the USADF Shari Berenbach said, “We have been impressed by the broad range of innovative strategies that African entrepreneurs are developing to tackle local energy challenges.

Access to power is critical to spur economic growth and each winning project in this Challenge will help bring electricity to communities who have lived without reliable power. We have already seen significant impact in the first phase of this challenge and we’re excited to help the next 22 winners realise their goals.”

Andy Herscowitz, USAID and Coordinator for Power Africa, said, “These 22 winners exemplify what Power Africa is all about: multiple US Government agencies and other partners working together with the private sector to increase electricity access in sub-Saharan Africa.

Although less than a year and a half old, Power Africa and its partners are making progress in alleviating energy poverty challenges in sub-Saharan Africa.

President Obama recently announced a renewed commitment to Power Africa with additional resources so we look forward to increasing our efforts across all of sub-Saharan Africa in the months to come.”

Broadening the initiative in Nigeria the “Green Village Electricity Project”, a 2013 winner of the grant has moved from 140 homes to powering an entire community in Nigeria and is widening the project to power 24 rural communities in Nigeria using their solar technology.

Africa - Electricity in Africa: Lighting a dark continent | September 27 | The Economist

Source URL: http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21620245-power-shortages-have-been-holding-africa-back-are-last-easing-lighting

Sep 27th 2014 | LAGOS

THE stylishly dressed men and women window-shopping in the air-conditioned cool of the Lagos Palms shopping mall speak of a Nigerian economy and middle class on the rise. But out the back, the stench of diesel fumes hanging heavily in the muggy tropical air is evidence of failings that are holding back Africa’s biggest economy: banks of diesel generators chug away to supply eye-wateringly expensive power because Nigeria’s rickety national grid is so unreliable.

Across Africa investors joke about living in a “bring-your-own-infrastructure” continent, in which firms must provide independent generators, water purification and even sewage treatment when building a factory or hotel. Of these the costliest is often power. Nigeria, which has a population three times larger than South Africa’s, generates just a tenth as much electricity.

Power from private generators costs $0.35 per kilowatt-hour or more, ten times more than electricity from the grid in most other countries. Analysts at Coronation, a South African asset manager, reckon electricity accounts for 6% of costs at Nigeria's biggest banks (each branch needs a generator) and 10% of the costs of telephone companies (each cellphone mast must have its own power).

Even India's ramshackle infrastructure looks good by comparison. Nigeria may produce roughly as much output per person as India, but it has only one-fifth the generating capacity per head, according to McKinsey, a consulting firm. China, meanwhile, is building new power plants so rapidly that it is adding the equivalent of an Africa to its grid every two years. The World Bank reckons that power shortages trim more than two percentage points from annual growth in GDP on average in Africa; in Nigeria the loss has been almost four percentage points a year.

After a drought in investment in new generating capacity lasting almost three decades, blooms of new power plants are now sprouting across sub-Saharan Africa like acacia seeds after a rainstorm. A tally by *The Economist* of announced power projects (under construction or at an advanced stage of planning) suggests that the region's electricity-generating capacity will increase by more than half by the end of the decade.

In the longer term governments have set what are probably over-ambitious targets. Angola, for instance, wants to increase its annual generating capacity from 1,800mW to 9,000mW by 2025.

South Africa, which already generates about two-thirds of the region's power, is adding about 15,000mW to its grid—about as much as the rest of sub-Saharan Africa produces now. Most of this will come from massive coal-fired power stations such as the one at Medupi, site of an existing coal mine. It alone will produce more power than Nigeria when it comes into service.

Almost as much new power will be of a greener variety, given that South Africa has approved 64 renewable-energy projects ranging from fields of wind turbines and solar cells to generators that burn sugarcane.

In other countries most of the new energy will be renewable or from gas, which is cleaner than coal. Ethiopia is building Africa's largest hydroelectric and geothermal plants. Between them the two projects will triple the country's power production. Kenya is drilling holes deep into the Rift Valley in Hell's Gate National Park to build what will ultimately be the world's largest single geothermal plant. At Lake Turkana, a particularly windy spot farther north in the Rift Valley, private investors are building Africa's biggest wind farm.

Two forces are driving the expansion. First, a number of African countries have either opened their markets to private investors or adopted clearer regulations that encourage investment. Take South Africa. For years it insisted that new capacity should be built only by the state-owned generator, Eskom. But in 2008 the country experienced crippling power shortages that forced mines and factories to cut production and sent millions of South Africans to bed early. The government reversed course and encouraged private investment in renewable energy sources.

Nigeria last year privatised state-owned distribution companies, while Kenya, Ghana and Tanzania are all attracting foreign investment. Anton Eberhard of the University of Cape Town reckons that, although investment by governments in power has largely remained stable, there have been big increases from other investors, including Chinese state-owned firms.

A second factor is the rapidly falling cost of renewable energy. Africa has some of the world's best potential sites for wind, solar and hydropower. Investors are proving readier to test the market by putting up a few windmills than by committing to big power stations. Wind farms and solar parks can also provide decentralised or "off-grid" power directly to customers, reducing the load on congested transmission lines. Given the high cost of power from diesel generators in Africa, renewable energy can be an attractive alternative.

Ahmed Heikal, chairman of Qalaa Holdings, an investment firm with holdings in several power producers, thinks that in Africa a "new model [of renewable energy] that bypasses the government is emerging". It is one in which firms are able to offer competitively priced renewable power without the hefty government subsidies needed to encourage investment elsewhere, such as solar parks in cloudy Germany or offshore wind farms in the rough waters of the North Sea. Africa has the potential to jump from being the world's electricity laggard to a leader in renewables—if inefficient governments don't hold it back.

From the print edition: Middle East and Africa

http://www.economist.com/printedition/2014-09-27

East Africa: Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda to Upgrade Cross-Border Power Grid | September 25 | Frontier Blog WSJ

Source URL: http://blogs.wsj.com/frontiers/2014/09/25/kenya-uganda-and-rwanda-to-upgrade-cross-border-power-grid/

Nicholas Bariyo

KAMPALA, Uganda–Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda are seeking consultants to conduct a feasibility study to upgrade the cross border electricity grid, officials from the three countries said in joint statement on Thursday, the latest infrastructure drive aimed at fostering economic integration in the region.

The project will involve building a high-voltage power line, running from Kenya's rift valley, through Uganda to central Rwanda. The officials didn't indicate how much the project would cost.

Interested companies have until Oct. 7 to submit bid documents for the project, which is expected to boost power export potential in the region, according to Uganda's Energy and Minerals Minister Peter Lokeris.

"Electricity demand in the region is growing, there is need to revamp the power distribution infrastructure to match generation projects," Mr. Lokeris said.

Years of sustained economic growth have boosted power demand in the region, straining inadequate existing facilities. Kenya and Uganda are connected by a decades-old power line, which is prone to breakdowns.

Kenya is trying to boost its power generation with a number of geothermal projects in its rift valley, while Uganda is building several hydro power plants along the Nile river.

Kenya, Uganda and Rwanda are also in the process of implementing a Chinese-funded railway project to link their respective economies, which is expected to cost up to $15 billion. East Africa has become a hot spot for foreign investors following the discovery of huge oil and gas reserves in recent years.

Standard Chartered bank said in July that it would more than double its financing commitment for electricity projects in Africa to at least $5 billion to support Power Africa, a U.S.-backed program to boost power generation on the continent.

More than two-thirds of the population of sub-Saharan Africa is without electricity, according to U.S. government figures.

Write to Nicholas Bariyo at nicholas.bariyo@wsj.com.

East Africa: M-Kopa Solar Powers Up 100,000th Home in East Africa | September 22 | CIO East Africa (Nairobi)

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201409230257.html

By Baraka Jefwa

M-KOPA Solar announced on Friday that it has powered up to 100,000 homes in Kenya and Uganda within two years of its commercial launch.

The 100,000th system was installed by Charles Lwanga, in his home in Masuliita, Uganda, where he explained the need for such a device in his household.

"There is no power in my village, I have four children and my family spends so much money on kerosene lighting, charging phones and radio batteries. I heard about M-KOPA Solar yesterday and decided to buy it today because it's going to save me a lot of money, and because it's affordable paying daily by mobile money," Lwanga explained.

M-KOPA Solar makes solar systems available to low-income customers on a risk-free basis. Customers can take home a system for a deposit of just US $35 and then continue to make 365 daily payments. All payments are made via mobile money.

The US $35 deposit is fully refundable at any time during the payment period, and products come standard with a 2-year warranty. After 365 daily payments are made, the device is unlocked with no further payments required.

Jesse Moore, Managing Director and Co-Founder, M-KOPA Solar, spoke of his delight at how the devices are being accepted in the East African region, he also highlighted the financial benefits of getting the device.

"I am delighted that Charles Lwanga has made the transition to solar. We estimate that customers like Charles will save US $750 over four years using an M-KOPA solar system." Moore said. "This means that our 100,000 customers will make combined savings of US $75 million, which they can invest in children's education, improving their farms, growing their businesses, and bettering their lives," he added.

M-KOPA is now selling 2,500 new systems each week across Kenya and Uganda. The 100,000th system was sold in Entebbe, Uganda by M-KOPA Solar agent Edward Mutebi, who talked about how happy he was.

"I am proud to have sold the 100,000th M-KOPA Solar system. This is my first week as an agent and I have already sold 8 systems. For me this is a good job opportunity, I am making money while helping customers save on kerosene," Mutebi said.

M-KOPA Solar sells products in both Kenya and Uganda via a local network of sales agents. There are nearly 1000 agents today and M-KOPA plans to add another 1,000 agents within the next year.

Ethiopia: Asseco to Modernize Energy Billing in Ethiopia | September 20 | The Reporter

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201409220987.html

By Asrat Seyoum

Warsaw — A proprietor of a polish IT solution company, Asseco Utility Management Solution (AUMS) and Enterprise Resource Planning solutions (ERP), are set to overhaul the overall energy billing system in Ethiopia following a USD 10 million contract that was signed between Information Network Security Agency (INSA)

and Asseco S.A. for the design of a comprehensive energy billing and customer data base management systems in the country.

AUMS is one of the flagship energy sector solutions that Asseco sold to power distributors in Poland and elsewhere. According to information obtained from the polish IT company, currently, some 60 percent of bills that are issued in Poland are those produced by the solution designed by Asseco.

The contract signed between the two parties states that the INSA 2.0 Energy Enterprise Management System Development and Implementation covers the delivery and launch of a modern software that will manage power consumption readings and customer services; while, Asseco has also entered a contract to play a role of an advisory in the development of ERP systems by INSA. According to the original contract, Asseco is expected to deliver and launch the software solutions by end of 2015.

Both AUMs and ERP are integral parts to INSA's goal of creating a modern energy sector in Ethiopia. And, among other things, maintenance cost optimization, IT integration cost optimization, ability to manage a swift change in offers and settlements, increased customer service efficiency, Customer service delocalization (customers are no longer assigned to branch offices) and ease in obtaining information on the financial result of the company thanks to integration with other corporate IT systems are some of the benefit that can accrue from the Asseco's solution that will be launched in Ethiopia.

To date, this deal is the biggest IT undertaking in Africa by Asseco. However, Artur Wiza, managing director of Asseco Poland, told The Reporter that the split of the former Ethiopian Electric Power Corporation (EEPCo) into Ethiopian Electric Power and Ethiopian Electric Services has resulted in stalling the launching of the billing system and other negotiations for a while but now the work is under way.

In a related news, Asseco's ongoing search for a local partner in Ethiopian is near completion with shortlisting of two small IT companies in Ethiopia. Although Asseco is not yet ready to divulge the names of the two companies, Wiza is positive that a deal will be struck during its next visit to Ethiopia. "Originally, we were scheduled to travel to Ethiopia at the beginning of October as part of 60-company business delegation that will travel with the Polish Prime Minister," he said. However, with Polish PM, Donald Tusk, leaving for the presidency of the European council, the scheduled visit was postponed indefinitely. Anyway, Wiza said, "By our next visit to Ethiopia we would have a local partner with whom we are thinking to form a joint venture. It is to be remembered that more than a year since Asseco started shortlisting companies for partnership in Ethiopia. Both companies we are in talks with are small IT companies by European standards," the director told The Reporter.

Asseco has celebrated its decade since it was first listed in Warsaw stock exchange and in that time, the company's annual revenue has increased from USD 100 million to USD 1.4 billion last budget year after joining the Warsaw Stock Exchange. Starting from a humble beginning as a startup company of one Adam Goral, now head of the publicly traded company, it is now one of Europe's IT giants occupying sixth place in the continent. Currently, Asseco derives most of its revenue from software development and is providing IT solutions to different businesses among them, IT solution for the financial sector, mainly the core banking system, solution for health-care system and billing and customer service systems for energy utility sectors. Apart from that, the company is also venturing out into hardware dimension by making hardware suited for the solution that it designs.

Ethiopia: Shift to 'green economy' boosting economic growth in Ethiopia | African Manager

Source URL: http://www.africanmanager.com/site_eng/detail_article.php?art_id=22592

Ethiopia will boost economic growth by investing in renewable energy sources, introducing new cooking technologies for the rural folk and boosting livestock trade in efforts to cut greenhouse gases, officials said Monday.

Abraham Tekeste, State Minister of Finance and Economic Development, said investments in renewable energy, roads, rail, water supply and healthcare facilities enabled Ethiopia to hit economic growth rate of 11.2% in the past thee years.

"We recognise the gains we have made need to be sustained for several decades to realise our vision of becoming a middle income economy over the medium term," Abraham told experts meeting at the UN Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA).

The UNECA has launched a series of studies across Africa to determine the impact of "green economic" policies.

They are examining investments in key sectors of the economy which favour skills development and job creation to boost economic growth.

"There already exists a wide range of policies and policy instruments that countries can develop and apply to shift to an inclusive green economy," said Fatima Denton, Director, Special Initiatives Division at the UNECA.

The UN organ is asking African countries to shift economic policies from over-reliance on agriculture and the mineral extraction and oil, to new industrial sectors with renewed emphasis on manufactured goods and industrialised sectors.

Denton said focusing on investments which do not increase the emission of carbon and minimising industrial and household pollution could accelerate economic growth in Africa, faster than the reliance on natural resources, which contribute to pollution.

"Evidence is mounting on the benefits which can yield from investments in inclusive green economy transitions," Denton said at the opening of a meeting to discuss a new Report on Inclusive Green Economy Policies and Structural Transformation.

The study suggests investing in green economies - renewable energy, wind power projects and geothermal sectors - could contribute to enormous amounts of economic growth, as high as 12% in the next 15 years, as shown by a study in Kenya.

"Adopting an inclusive green economy approach to structural transformation could enable African countries to ensure efficient, equitable and sustainable use of their natural resources and reduce the adverse impacts of economic growth," said Denton.

Denton said the study on the benefits of shifting economic growth plans to more climate friendly technologies in Kenya, showed it has the ability to save 3.1 million people from poverty by 2030.

In Ethiopia, the country's economic blueprint, the Growth and Transformation Plan (GTP) which advocates investments in roads, railways and a Mega-electricity dam, could produce what the ECA experts called "very good outcomes."

UN officials say studies altogether confirm investing in climate-friendly technologies in the fields of agriculture, energy and focusing on economic policies would make it possible to produce more food, cut carbon pollution and reduce land degradation.

The experts are meeting to identify and define areas where ECA could contribute to support Ethiopia on green economy and economic reform strategies.

The Report on Inclusive Green Economy Policies and Structural Transformation in Ethiopia was prepared within the framework of the ECA study on Inclusive Green Economy Policies and Structural Transformation in selected African Countries.

Ghana positioning as energy hub of West Africa | October 1 | BusinessDay

Source URL: http://businessdayonline.com/2014/10/ghana-positioning-as-energy-hub-of-west-africa/

October 1, 2014 | Filed under: Gas | Author: Vincent Baffour-Acheampong

Recent erratic power supply in Ghana has left citizens bewildered; most especially, businesses and industries that require constant and steady power supply to ensure continuous productivity.

With citizens' complaints and frantic efforts by government to find a lasting solution to the energy situation in Ghana, President John Dramani Mahama's declaration of a probable end to the continuous inconsistent power supply has been well received.

Most topical among his declarations was the ambitious quest for Ghana to become an energy hub in West Africa. This followed his inspection of the Atuabo Gas project which is expected to generate 550MW of power. This addition in power generation is in line with the vision of the government in positioning Ghana as a net exporter of energy.

The Ministry of Energy has revealed that Ghana's current electricity demand stands at over 2000 megawatts (MW) and further estimates an annual capacity addition of about 200MW.

Over the years, Ghana has added about 1,000 megawatts (MW) of thermal generation capacity. As a result, Ghana's current generation capacity of 2,125 MW is made up of about 50 percent hydro and 50 percent thermal plants. Nevertheless, inadequate and unreliable power supply remains a major constraint to future economic growth.

Current electricity demand in the country is said to be growing at about 10 percent per annum and Ghana is estimated to require additional capacity of about 200MW to match the increasing demand in the medium to long term.

Ghana's total installed capacity is 2884.5MW but electricity supplied does not meet demand. This has resulted in the ongoing power rationing.

The Power Problem

Databank Financial Services research revealed that the power cuts in the country, compelled companies to incur unplanned operating costs of about $62 million per month or $744 million per annum due to the use of privately acquired generators.

Though the commissioning of the Bui Hydro dam, Ghana's second largest hydro plant, by President Mahama, was believed to have set the country on its way to becoming a major producer of power in West Africa. The dam is currently producing 90MW of electricity despite its installed capacity of 400MW.

Ghana's power sector is faced with the problem of inability of installed plants to operate at full capacity. This is due mainly to the limitations in fuel supply owing to rising fuel prices and uncertainty in rainfall and water inflows into the hydroelectric power facilities.

Atuabo Gas: Hope for Ghana?

"The important thing about this gas is that it allows us to have energy security in terms of putting in more thermal production, and it fits our programme of turning Ghana into the energy hub of West Africa. All the companies that we have signed Memorandum of Understandings with for installation of Independent Power Producers (IPP) thermal plants will feel secure to go ahead because they know that by the time they finish their thermal projects, gas will be available to power those projects".

These were the words of President John Dramani Mahama when he visited the Atuabo gas project in the Western Region of the country.

According to him, the project, which is 99.8 percent complete, would be a game changer for the struggling Ghanaian economy, but most especially, positioning Ghana to be a net exporter of energy.

President Mahama believes that when completed, the Atuabo Gas project would drastically reduce the pressure on Ghana's foreign exchange reserves.

He revealed that with the coming on board of the Gas plant, Ghana would save almost half a billion dollars a year in light crude purchases, and another billion dollars in foreign exchange savings for the purchase of light crude oil, and that is because the VRA [Volta River Authority] will be able to purchase the gas in Cedis.

"The multiplier effect of [gas] project will be enormous within our economy", he added.

Ghana as energy hub in West Africa

The gas project when it comes on stream, will produce 107 million standard cubic feet of lean gas, 500 tonnes of LPG, 80 tonnes of pentane and 45 tons of condensates daily.

According to information on united world Ghana, government's plans to build up the energy industry are still developing, but many aspects of it are already clear. The country's electricity generating capacity of 2026 megawatts is targeted to be raised to 5000 megawatts by 2015.

The energy ministry is also studying the possibility of building up a refining and petrochemical industry, though the government is very much aware of what must be done before that process can start.

Emmanuel Armah-Kofi Buah, Minister of Energy and Petroleum explains the idea better; "We are building capacity in different sectors. We need assistance to partner with our educational institutions, improve infrastructure and improve the training of more petrochemical engineers and more people to study the oil and gas industry. We need to train more geologists and economists and legal people in the industry. We also need the capacity to strengthen our institutions."

The information further revealed that the project to extend Ghana and West Africa's power grid is already underway. Currently 67 percent of Ghana's residents have access to electricity, and the network is being enlarged, with the goal of reaching 100 percent by 2020.

Power plants are being planned and built, with one at Sunon Asogli recently completed, fueled from a gas line connecting Nigeria's oil fields to the new generating station. Transmission lines need to be built to Ghana's eastern, western and northern neighbors, such as Burkina Faso, Mali and Nigeria, and agreements with many of the countries involved have been signed.

Inusah Abdulai Fuseini, minister for lands and natural resources also had this to say on Ghana becoming an energy hub for West Africa; "The prospects of tapping into Ghana's resource base, in particular as regards the energy sector, are huge. We can become market players in the sector and Western Ghana will become an energy hub by producing power and selling to other landlocked countries."

The goal, of course, is to use the country's petroleum resources to power the planned electrical grid. The government has made great progress in extracting, selling, processing and using the oil, and is also studying closely how to minimize the environmental impact and make sure the wealth generated is put to use by improving the lives of Ghanaians.

"We have to be very focused on the things that we have to do to ensure that it will be a blessing. We do not compromise when it comes to environmental issues. We have made it very clear that there are companies that are coming to Ghana, and you have to apply the same international standards that they apply everywhere," the energy minister further stressed.

Some have wondered why uninterrupted supply of power should be a problem when Ghana's demand is less than installed capacity. They have also argued that Ghana is in this situation because of the inability of the power plants to operate at full capacity due to low levels of water and inadequate fuel supply.

Emmanuel Kofi Buah, has promised an increase of 1000 MW by next year when the Ghana Gas Company begins full operation.

The World Bank also believes Ghana has the right power policies but is failing to implement them and run the sector efficiently.

According to the Bank, the "solutions to the sector's problems are well known; the challenge is to carry them out."

"Proactive leadership of the energy sector, with a focus on efficiency and timely delivery, is crucial to Ghana's ambitions for economic growth", the World Bank has said.

VincentBaffour-Acheampong

Ghana To Get Utility-Scale Wind Farm | October 2 | Spyghana.com

Source URL: http://www.spyghana.com/ghana-to-get-utility-scale-wind-farm/

Global wind and solar company Mainstream Renewable Power, has signed an agreement with Swiss wind farm developer NEK Umwelttechnik, to build and operate Ghana's first utility-scale wind farm at Ayitepa, 40 kilometres from Accra.

Mainstream Renewable Power signed the agreement to purchase the 225 megawatt (MW) Ayitepa Wind Farm, which represents a total investment of 525 million dollars, and is expected to reach financial close next year and start generating power early in 2016.

A statement issued by Kim Camilleri Director Strategic Communications of the company and copied to the Ghana News Agency in Accra on Thursday said "The companies will co-develop the wind farm until financial close.

"Mainstream will manage the construction as well as the operations and maintenance of the wind farm for its lifecycle.

"The project is currently in the latter stages of development with all major permits secured. Grid and off take agreements are being finalized".

It said when fully operational, the wind farm would generate approximately 10 per cent of Ghana's total electricity generation capacity, which currently stands at 2,000MW.

The statement quoted Mr Wisdom Ahiataku-Togobo, Director of Renewable Energy, Ministry of Energy and Petroleum said: "It is my hope that this agreement between NEK and Mainstream will accelerate the process towards the realization of wind farms in Ghana and they can be assured of the full support of the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum.

"The project is consistent with government policy to increase the contribution of renewable energy in the electricity generation mix.

"The Renewable Energy Act 2011 (Act) provides the necessary legal and fiscal incentives including feed-in-tariff or sufficient security to ensure return on investment by Independent Power Producers.

"The government has more than two years of bankable wind energy data along the south eastern corridor of the country where wind energy prospects are very encouraging".

According to the statement, Mainstream's Chief Executive Eddie O'Connor said: "This wind farm is the ideal solution for Ghana because the country needs large quantities of electricity and it needs it fast. Wind and solar power are the only proven technologies in the world today which can achieve the dual objectives of speed of deployment and scale.

"From initial concept to operation Mainstream has delivered utility-scale projects into operation in just over three years.

"The Ayitepa Wind Farm is well advanced, and can be generating electricity in less than 18 months from now. No other generation technology can match that in terms of speed of delivery."

He said Mainstream was delighted to further strengthen their position as the leading wind and solar developer on the continent of Africa.

“We have already developed and built the continent’s largest operating wind farm at Jeffreys Bay. In South Africa, Mainstream has three wind and solar farms already operational and an additional three large-scale wind farms ready to go into construction this year.”

The statement quoted Dr. Christoph Kapp NEK’s Chief Executive as stating that: ”After more than 15 years of presence in Ghana, NEK is very pleased to announce that with Mainstream Renewable Power we have found a very experienced and professional partner with whom we will implement this first large scale wind project in West Africa.

“This project will not only contribute to a sustainable, clean and independent production of electricity, but will also be accompanied by a lot of social benefits and improvements for the local population such as labour, better education, water supply and electrification for nearby villages and towns”.

Mainstream Renewable Power is one of the world’s leading independent developers of renewable energy projects.

With a development pipeline of over 17,000 megawatts globally, it is currently operating and constructing solar and wind farms across Ireland, South Africa, Chile and Canada.

NEK Switzerland has been active in Ghana through its branch NEK (Ghana) Ltd. in the wind energy sector since 1998. NEK (Ghana) Ltd. was established in 2003 in order to develop renewable energy projects in Ghana.

Kenya: Kenya government unveils plan to assess energy consumption and demand | October 2 | Standard Media

Source URL: http://www.standardmedia.co.ke/business/article/2000136774/kenya-government-unveils-plan-to-assess-energy-consumption-and-demand

BY PETER KIRAGU

NAIROBI, KENYA: The Government Wednesday appeared to own up to the criticism that its ambitious plan to add another 5000MW of power to the national grid by 2016 could leave the country with more electricity than it needs.

The Kenya Electricity Generating Company (KenGen) and the Geothermal Development Company (GDC) as well as other independent power producers are currently undertaking initiatives to raise the country's installed capacity to slightly over 6,700 MW by 2016 from the current 1,664MW.

Critics feel this is too much more energy than the country will need, raising fear that most of the new power will go to waste bearing in mind that some of the electricity currently being generated ends up as waste especially at night when the demand is not high.

The Government seems to have woken up to the possibility of such a bad scenario occurring and has now started a one-month survey to determine the exact amount of electricity demand that the country has before more is generated. This way, said Energy and Petroleum Cabinet Secretary Davis Chirchir, the country will ensure the energy it generates is at same level with demand.

"We don't want to be in a situation where we cannot be able to meet the demand envisioned," the CS told reporters yesterday during the launch of a web-based portal targeting large power consumers like manufacturers.

Through the portal, manufacturers will be able to advise Kenya Power in advance on the amount of new or additional power they need to either expand their existing production capacity or start new factories.

The Government is of the view that the initiative will in addition help in cutting the time it takes to connect new large power consumers after application. It is estimated that it takes up to 164 days to get an electricity connection for large manufacturers upon application while the ideal situation should be 16 days.

Kenya Power has, however, slashed this period to 56 days, with the target to have this done in 30 days for the big customers by the end of the year.

See Also: Kenya aims to add 1,200 MW to creaking power grid

POWER DISTRIBUTOR

With the pre-determined demand established, it will enable the power distributor to, for instance, order generators in time bearing in mind that this sometimes takes nine month between the time of order and delivery.

"The project is important to ensure that the power generated does not go to waste," said Betty Maina, the Kenya Association of Manufacturers (Kam) chief executive officer. Kam represents over 9,000 manufacturers who use up to 60 per cent of the energy generated in the country.

Kam admits that the current manufacturing base of the country cannot be able to take up all the new electricity expected to come on board. "We need new industries in the country to ensure the 5000MW of energy are utilised," she added.

Chirchir said the additional power should help to cut the cost of electricity by more than 30 per cent, something that will boost the country's competitive edge. The Cabinet Secretary regretted that most of the cement makers in the country currently have to import their clinker from outside because of the prohibitive energy costs here.

Kenya: Kenya Seeks to Auction Renewable Energy Deals | September 26 | The Star

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201409261367.html

The government has began search for a consultancy to explore the introduction of renewable energy auctions, with a view to cutting retail consumers' power costs.

In a notice on Wednesday, the Ministry of Energy and Petroleum said the successful bidder will conduct a study within six months in this line, whose recommendations if adopted will effectively revise the current national grid feed-in tariff policy that operates on a first-come first-served basis.

It said the study will be financed by part of proceeds from a loan received from the French Agency for Development for technical assistance to develop a power generation and transmission master-plan. The amount extended by AFD was undisclosed.

According to the International Renewable Energy Agency, auctions involve the government floating tenders for installation of certain capacities of renewable energy-based electricity. Independent power producers participating in the auctions submit bids with price per unit of electricity at which they can develop the project.

The government then evaluates offers, with pricing a key part of the criteria, before awarding power-purchase agreements to successful bidders.

The ministry said capacities of approved renewable energy projects and those likely to reach power-purchase agreements are approaching the limit as envisaged under the current feed-in tariff first enforced in 2008 and revised in 2010 and 2012.

Solar and wind power, it said, will be a key focus of the study to align the technologies "more accurately" in the energy sector planning projections.

"Further, with the government's aim of reducing consumer retail tariffs, there is a need to relook at these technologies and if need be, propose a suitable approach in which the private sector invests in these technologies," the notice stated.

The consultant will assess the potential of renewable energy resource in the country in relation to the existing and planned electricity grid network and determine the grid's ability to absorb generation from small scale systems and the impact on the quality of grid power and electricity tariffs.

It is expected to advise on the benefits of change from the existing feed-in tariff policy and the risks associated with a switch to an energy auction system. The consultant will also recommend the capacities and timelines for the first cycle of auctions and the thereafter.

The current feed-in tariff policy - covering wind, biomass, geothermal, solar and small hydro projects - was intended to reduce transaction costs associated with negotiating and signing power-purchase agreements for small renewable generators.

The standardised PPA means there is no bidding for renewable energy sites and resources, and limits the number of negotiable clauses. For wind, the existing feed-in tariff applies for 20 years from the date of first commissioning of the power plant.

Nigeria: Abuja Disco Plans Yearly Installation of 100,000 Prepaid Meters | September 30 | This Day

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201409300676.html

By Chineme Okafor

Abuja Electricity Distribution Company (AEDC) has said it will procure and install 100,000 pre-paid electricity meters yearly. Managing Director of AEDC, Mr. Neil Croucher stated recently that the metering plan which will see it roll out 100,000 pre-paid meters to consumers is expected to close-up extant metering gap in the network's coverage areas. Croucher explained that the company had inherited challenges in closing up the metering gap in the network.

He however noted that the yearly 100,000 pre-paid meters plan will address such challenges, adding that the company will follow-up the plan with a novel electronic billing system. The electronic billing system, he said is aimed at providing electricity consumers within the network, a comfortable vending platform, as well as ensure accountability in revenue collection within the network.

"We inherited a huge metering gap with different billing system that does not communicate with one another. Indeed, there are five different vending platforms, which we're trying to harmonise them so that they can communicate with each other; meaning that customers can buy their electricity token from any part of the areas covered by AEDC," Croucher said.

He further noted that: "The operation of five different vending platforms have their challenges, which were not in the interest of our customers and our operation.

In order to achieve this, we have an arrangement to install 100,000 meters a year in order to wipe out the backlog in our coverage area as quick as possible."

"After securing the metering platform, we can then introduce our e-payment solution through which customers can purchase power either through internet, cell phones and e-banking," Croucher added.

He also told reporters that the company plans to migrate from the manual billing system it inherited to modern system, saying: "In the next few weeks, we should have the single vending platform commissioned and then rolled out to our entire supply area."

"Also on the billing system, we also have six billing centres that would also communicate with each other and give us a centralised data base," Croucher stressed.

In line with the proposed billing system, he also announced plans for a new meter reading system that will capture data electronically and automatically upload same into the company's billing system, thus eliminating estimated billing and ensuring the integrity of bills.

He however stated on claims that the indebtedness of some distribution companies to Nigerian banks was affecting the operations in the banking sector.

"I think it is important to separate the company, AEDC from its owners. AEDC has not obtained any loan and so we don't have loan repayment issue or debt over-hang on our necks, though we would be taking loans in the process so that we would be able to fund the many projects which are required," he said.

Nigeria: American investors earmark $106m, 100mw solar plant in Nigeria September 26 | National Mirror

Source URL: http://nationalmirroronline.net/new/american-investors-earmark-106m-100mw-solar-plant-in-nigeria/

Global Business Resources, U.S.A, a consortium of international investors are in Nigeria for a follow-up discussion with the Federal Government for the realization of two 50MW each solar-powered plants in Kumbotso, Kano State and Karu, in Abuja, F.C.T. The Minister of State, (Power), Mohammed Wakil had earlier met the group in Bridgeport – Miami, U.S.A.

The group's mission in Nigeria is to focus on developing Actionable Renewable energy generation strategy, using abundant solar resources in the country. Deputy Director of Press, in the ministry of power, Timothy Oyedeji, in a statement noted that a copy of proposal submitted to the Ministry Wednesday indicated that in addition to putting in place a framework for the building of the two plants, the group is prepared to undertake Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping for Renewable energy as done by some African countries like Ghana, South-Africa, Kenya and Ethiopia.

According to the statement such a move will help facilitate rural electrification projects on a Public Private Partnership agreement, if adopted by Nigeria. The group has the target to develop a master plan that will fast track 100% Rural electrification in the next five years (5 years), just as it has informed Nigerians that the project will leverage on resources from Obama Power Africa Initiative.

Speaking on behalf of the Minister, Engr. Abayomi Adebisi said that Nigerians are excited about this initiative, "as the country needs power even as at yesterday". While calling on genuine investors to take advantage of this need-gap, he said the vast resources of oil, gas, wind, sun and biomass should be developed for power generation, especially now that the sector has moved from public control to private driven one.

Expressing optimism in the prompt delivery of the project, James Nicholas, who led the Americans, said that Africa has the most promising solar potential in terms of cost, as the U.S has developed cost-effective technology in response to the pressures from Green movements. From the available information, the cost of 2.06 cents per kilo hour is quite reasonable, adding that 106 million dollars will be required to fund these two plants.

Nigeria: Lagos Intensifies Campaign for Energy Conservation | October 2 | Daily Independent

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201410021276.html

Lagos State Government has announced moves to intensify its energy conservation effort to bring power to the people of the state and ensure that public offices enjoy 24-hour electricity.

To this end, the state's Ministry of Energy and Mineral Resources and its implementing agency, Lagos State Electricity Board (LSEB), on Tuesday announced the commencement of the second Energy Conservation Month in the state, which is always observed in October.

Addressing journalists in Ikeja, Commissioner for Energy and Mineral Resources, Taofiq Tijani, said the campaign was intended to enable more residents to be well informed about the benefits of energy conservation.

The Energy Conservation Month initiative was launched last year as a Behavioural Change Campaign to instil the habit of efficient use of electric power in the residents.

The campaign dubbed, 'Conserve Energy, Save Money' (CESM), runs throughout the 31 days in the month, during which the key messages of the benefits of efficient use of available power are espoused to the residents.

"We are persuaded that when people understand the benefits of energy conservation to their own personal finances, it will make adoption of the practice easier," Tijani said.

He stated that during the commemoration of the Energy Conservation Month, which will hold throughout the month, a number of initiatives aimed at up-scaling the adoption of energy conservation habit among the residents would be launched.

These, according to him, include the launch of the improved Lagos Energy Calculator App, the first consumer-focused application in Africa, designed to help consumers closely estimate the amount of energy they consume and then take steps to conserve energy and reduce wastage.

Tijani also said a colourful road show across five select regions in the state namely - Ikorodu, Badagry, Epe, Eti-Osa and Oshodi - would be held as part of efforts by government to enable more residents to be well informed about the benefits of energy conservation.

Nigeria: Nigeria Establishes 118 Power Projects to Address Electricity Challenges | October 2 | This Day

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201410020369.html

By Emma Okonji

The federal government is currently constructing about 118 power projects as part of efforts to tackle the low electricity generation in the country. The 118 power projects spread across the country, are at different stages of completion. Chairman of Nigerian Electricity Regulatory Commission (NERC), Dr. Sam Amadi disclosed this at a monthly breakfast meeting organised by Nigerian-British Chamber of Commerce (NBCC) in Lagos recently.

Speaking on the theme, 'Nigerian Power Sector: The New Frontier,' Amadi called on Nigerians to exercise patience saying the 118 power projects will boost power supply when completed. He advised investors to explore various opportunities in the power sector which he said, is expected to grow from N620 billion in 2013 to over N1 trillion in 2016. He said the commission is also working on cost effective tariff to ensure good returns on investment. Amadi, who was represented by the Deputy General Manager NERC, Abudulahi Mohammed, said huge opportunities abound in all subsectors of the Nigerian electricity supply industry, which he listed to include gas generation, transmission and distribution.

He, however, admitted there are challenges within the system, particularly in the area of gas supply, and explained that most power plants in the country were not working to full capacity. "Almost all the 20 turbines in the gas-fired thermal generation plants have no gas or very little gas available for use as generating feedstock," he said. The NERC boss said the government was handling the gas issue as a national emergency and is adopting short, medium and long term strategies to end the crisis, stressing that government is also exploring coal-to-power and other renewable energy channels for diversification.

On the issue of power transmission, he said there was need to prevail on the board of Transmission Company of Nigeria (TCN) to ensure that the Manitoba management contract was fully implemented. "This includes, sourcing of funds to strengthen and expand the transmission network, even though a lot of investment is going into transmission," he said.

He appreciated banks from Nigeria for supporting the sector and also encouraged them to continue to live up to expectation. "Investments required in the power sector is highly capital intensive and long-term in nature. Capital market finance is especially attractive to project sponsors as it provides access to fixed-term debt over a longer-term than banks can offer. Thus, huge opportunities exist for increasing sponsors' return on equity in an industry with huge growth potential," Amadi added.

Speaking at the forum, President of NBCC, Adeyemi Adefulu, explained that Nigerians were impatient with the outcome of power privatisation in the country. He said many people are still experiencing electricity blackout, and called for renewed assurance from stakeholders on the matter. "We have long been discussing the issue of power generation and distribution. What we need now is to put our words into action," he said.

He revealed that most of the privatisation carried out in the power sector were sponsored by financiers who are yet to get their money back. He therefore, called for strong regulations to safe guard the system in the interest of all. He commended Amadi for efforts made in regulating the sector, adding that the chamber, as part of its re-engineering process, would continue to organise programmes that would foster better trade relations and provide directions for industry stakeholders in the country.

Tanzania: Millions of Homes to Get Power Next Year | October 1 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201410010269.html

By Marc Nkwame

Arusha — MORE than 14 million Tanzanians will be connected to the National Grid by June, next year, when most rural village homes in the country get lit up through the ongoing rural electrification project.

The Commissioner for Energy and Petroleum Affairs, Mr Hosea Mbise, said that 30 per cent of the country will be connected to the main grid before June, next year.

He also said that 50 per cent of Tanzanians (more than 23 million residents) throughout the country, should be enjoying electricity services by 2025.

"We are recording steady progress which should be credited to the Rural Energy Agency (REA) efforts whose network of gridlines crisscrossing the country is slowly but surely lighting up Tanzania, especially in the remote parts," added Eng. Hosea.

He said that the country deserved recognition in recording such achievements considering that covering more than a million square kilometres, Tanzania was extremely large.

In 2005 it was only nine per cent of the country's population had been connected to the main grid and now the figure has jumped to 30 per cent, with the country aiming at 50 per cent next year.

Mr Mbise was speaking here during the occasion to launch the newly designed logo for the Rural Energy Agency, together with the REA Client Service Charter, at the Arusha International Conference Centre (AICC).

The Director General for the Rural Electrification Agency, Dr Lutengano Mwakahesya, said that connecting remote villages to the national grid is a major component in the country's development goals.

The success achieved so far has helped cut back on rural-urban migration because the availability of power in villages has enabled these areas to get basic and essential services that were previously found only in urban centres. "There are now beauty parlours in rural areas.

The grain mills have been transformed from the ancient, rather noisy diesel powered ones into modern electric ones. The residents access all forms of communication including mobile phones, the internet and digital television services," said Dr Mwakihesya.

The Arusha Technical College (ATC) is also benefiting from ongoing REA projects in rural areas because the institution's students are being deployed to help in setting up electricity projects countrywide, according to the Assistant Rector, Eng. Vincent Mgaya.

It was, however, observed here during the REA meeting that, the average electricity consumption per capita in Tanzania, which stands at 100 units was still low compared to the international average of 500 units.

Tanzania: Mtwara Natural Gas to Cut Pollution | September 26 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201409260430.html

New York — TANZANIA has pledged to the United Nations that it would use its 'recently acquired' natural gas fortune to significantly cut its current reliance on air polluting energy.

This is part of the country's specific pledges to the UN on how it would join the rest of the world in implementing some climate change interventions.

More than 55 countries from all over the world have made specific pledges at the ongoing 69th session of the UN General Assembly here.

on Thursday, the Minister of State in the Vice-President's Office (Environment), Dr Binilith Mahenge, said at the UN that the government has largely pegged its promise on reducing dependency on charcoal by maximising the use of gas expected to start after 2022.

Tanzania's natural gas deposits are now estimated at 50.5 trillion cubic feet and construction of the production plant in Mtwara could start after 2016.

Dr Mahenge said, "We have pledged that once we get the gas we shall expand the needed infrastructure and educate and encourage our people on the good virtues of using gas instead of charcoal.

To realise this pledge, the country, he said, had asked for funding to help it take this gas to homes, first starting with Dar es Salaam and ultimately across the country.

"This will cut reliance on charcoal which has prompted the felling of of trees for years. We cannot ignore science. This activity results in huge scales of pollution and forest degradation and the impact can be seen in our forest areas," he said.

Dar es Salaam, it was reported, consumes more than 200,000 bags of charcoal a day. "We have also said that we have various water resources that we can use to produce 4.7 gigawatts of electricity which is environment friendly," he said.

"But we have also said we have geothermal power which can help those in rural and urban areas to reduce environment degradation.

He noted further, "We have also asked to be assisted on how we can use more irrigation but using less water in what is called smart agriculture."

More so, Tanzania in its specific pledge has banked on the principle that SAGCOT will use smart agriculture. SAGCOT is an inclusive, multi-stakeholder partnership to rapidly develop the region's agricultural potential, which was initiated at the World Economic Forum (WEF) Africa summit 2010 with the support of founding partners including farmers, agri-business people, the government of Tanzania and companies from across the private sector.

"What President Jakaya Kikwete said on behalf of Africa Union (AU) and US President Barack Obama highlighted calls on all of us to make interventions.

This is our plan starting this financial year," he said. The minister added that everyone had a role to play, but the big carbon emitters should also play their part in taking action, both by cutting emissions but also by providing technology and funding to the 'offended' part of the world.

Dr Mahenge said he was impressed that political leaders had listened to scientific advice that the planet is under threat from climate change.

"When you hear that these changes will affect global activities, it is important that leaders make timely interventions. There are issues like how we can reduce carbon emissions and how we can access funding to be able to adapt.

So we need funding to build the required technology and achieve capacity among our experts," he pointed out. The same was echoed by the Minister for foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mr Bernard Membe, who said that pledges at the UN would be implemented and translated into various politics back home.

On Wednesday, Mr Kikwete told a United Nations meeting that the world's top emitters of carbon must take action and not leave Africa to confront climate change consequences single handedly.

He told the UN General Assembly here that the African continent was the least emitter, yet it faces significant consequences of what is put in the air from elsewhere by powerful economies. He was presenting a common position for Africa on climate change as the leader of the Conference of African Heads of States on Climate Change (CAHOSCC) at the UN Climate Summit.

Tanzania: Regional Power Project Planned | October 1 |Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201410011024.html

By Rose Athumani

ZAMBIA, Tanzania and Kenya will soon enjoy reduced electricity costs following the envisaged completion of the ZTK interconnection power project.

Three energy ministers from Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya signed a Cooperation Agreement in Dar es Salaam on Tuesday, binding their respective countries to the implementation of the power project which will also see many rural people accessing electricity.

The project will also attract investors. Addressing power utility delegates from the three nations, the Tanzanian Minister for Energy and Minerals, Prof Sospeter Muhongo said Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya will each solicit funding and implement the project infrastructure in each respective country that will be linked at the border.

He added that the three countries have enough resources to produce enough power for local consumption and sell the surplus to other African nations, connecting the North and the South Power Pool.

"We want to see power transmission connecting Cape Town and Cairo for the economic and social prosperity of our continent. This will reduce poverty once more people in rural areas access power and attract more investment to the continent," he said. He added that currently 75 per cent of Africa has no power.

The minister said that Zambia has enough resources to generate power from coal, while Kenya has already started generating power from geothermal sources and coal, while Tanzania has coal and natural gas.

"With all these resources at our disposal the three nations can produce enough electricity for local consumption and sell the surplus to other African nations," he said.

He added that the projects will be completed by 2016. He said the ZTK interconnection project will cost between 400 million US dollars and 500 million.

The Kenyan Cabinet Secretary for Energy and Petroleum, Mr Davis Chirchir, underscored the need for the three nations to work quickly to ensure timely completion of the project to connect the Eastern and Southern Power Pool all the way to Cairo.

"Unless we start trading with one another, we cannot reach out to other markets," he explained, stressing that the Kenyan government is fully committed to the ZTK power interconnection project.

The Zambian Minister for Mines, Energy and Water Development, Mr Christopher Yaluma, said the three nations have procrastinated for too long, calling on theeach country to show commitment to the project. "This is unusual business. We need to get committed if we are going to achieve anything.

This project will not only bring benefits in trade, but also a boom in investment for our region," he added. Funding Institution present, including African Development Bank (AfDB) and World Bank (WB) and Donor countries including Norway, Japan, France and the European Union have expressed their continued support.

The African Development Bank (AfDB) Country Representative, Ms Tonia Kandiero, said her bank together with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) is funding the Kenyan-Tanzania interconnection as a multi-nation project at an estimated cost of US 271.54 million dollars, split between the countries.

She said that Kenya will receive 50.52 million US dollars and the remaining 221.02 million US dollars will go to Tanzania. "We are also following up the 400kV Mbeya-Iringa transmission line as a national project and also the Zambia-Tanzania interconnector for funding purposes," she added.

Tanzania: Tanesco Vows to End Power Shortages in Dar | September 24 | Tanzania Daily News (Dar es Salaam)

Source URL: http://allafrica.com/stories/201409240231.html

By Zena Chande

TANZANIA Electric Supply Company (Tanesco) has said that there will no longer be power shortages in Dar es Salaam by August next year.

Speaking to journalists during a tour of five substations in Dar es Salaam on Monday, Tanesco Managing Director, Mr Felchesmi Mramba said that construction of the substations is progressing well and will soon be completed thus Dar es Salaam residents will no longer have power problems.

The five power plants are located at Mbagala, Gongolamboto, City Centre, Kurasini and Kinyerezi. "At first, we had five substations to distribute electricity at Ubungo, Ilala, Tegeta, Kipawa and Makumbusho but they are not enough for the city's current needs that's why we decided to add five more substations and by August, next year, they would have been completed and solve electricity problems in Dar es Salaam," he said.

He cited the problem with electricity in Mbagala, saying that the number of electricity users has been increasing compared to the power being generated and distributed to the area, and he promised that once the substation is completed it would end the problem.

"Due to the current increase in consumption of electricity, Mbagala at the moment needs 70MW, but the electricity being distributed is only 30MW thus after completion of the substation the deficit would be covered," he said.

Mr Mramba also took the opportunity to explain that more efforts of generating electricity are concentrated in Dar es Salaam because it is one area that has the highest consumption in the country. "Tanzania needs a total of 905MW, out of that 600MW are to be used in Dar es Salaam alone.

That is why we want to rid the region of the problem because it has the highest demand of power. After Dar es Salaam follows Arusha, Tanga and Mwanza," he said.

"After that, we want to add another 22 substations to distribute electricity in Dar es Salaam in areas like Mbezi Beach, Bahari Beach, Bunju and so forth. We will also construct another substation at Luguruni in Mbezi Kimara, we want to have enough electricity," he added.

1.